

SENATE BILL No. 531

DIGEST OF INTRODUCED BILL

Citations Affected: IC 21-14-11.

Synopsis: Tuition reduction for volunteer firefighters. Provides for a 50% reduction in tuition and fees at state educational institutions for certain volunteer firefighters.

Effective: July 1, 2009.

Stutzman, Charbonneau

January 15, 2009, read first time and referred to Committee on Tax and Fiscal Policy.

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First Regular Session 116th General Assembly (2009)

PRINTING CODE. Amendments: Whenever an existing statute (or a section of the Indiana Constitution) is being amended, the text of the existing provision will appear in this style type, additions will appear in **this style type**, and deletions will appear in ~~this style type~~.

Additions: Whenever a new statutory provision is being enacted (or a new constitutional provision adopted), the text of the new provision will appear in **this style type**. Also, the word **NEW** will appear in that style type in the introductory clause of each SECTION that adds a new provision to the Indiana Code or the Indiana Constitution.

Conflict reconciliation: Text in a statute in *this style type* or ~~this style type~~ reconciles conflicts between statutes enacted by the 2008 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

SENATE BILL No. 531

A BILL FOR AN ACT to amend the Indiana Code concerning higher education.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:

1 SECTION 1. IC 21-14-11 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE
2 AS A **NEW** CHAPTER TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
3 JULY 1, 2009]:

4 **Chapter 11. Tuition and Fee Reduction for Volunteer**
5 **Firefighters**

6 **Sec. 1. This chapter applies to an individual who:**

7 (1) is a volunteer firefighter (as defined in IC 36-8-12-2) and
8 meets the eligibility requirements set forth under section 8(a)
9 of this chapter;

10 (2) is eligible to pay the resident tuition rate (as determined by
11 the state educational institution) at the state educational
12 institution in which the individual is enrolled or will enroll;
13 and

14 (3) possesses the requisite academic qualifications.

15 **Sec. 2. (a) Subject to subsection (b), an eligible applicant is**
16 **exempt from the payment of fifty percent (50%) of educational**
17 **costs for instruction at the state educational institution in which the**

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eligible applicant is enrolled or will enroll.

(b) The maximum amount that an eligible applicant is exempt from paying for a semester hour is an amount equal to fifty percent (50%) of the cost of an undergraduate semester credit hour at the state educational institution in which the eligible applicant enrolls.

Sec. 3. If an eligible applicant continues to fulfill the eligibility requirements set forth under section 8(a) of this chapter, the eligible applicant shall receive the tuition exemption under this chapter for all semester credit hours in which the eligible applicant enrolls up to a maximum of one hundred twenty-four (124) semester credit hours.

Sec. 4. An eligible applicant qualifying for or receiving the tuition exemption under this chapter is entitled to enter, remain, and receive instruction at a state educational institution under the same conditions, qualifications, and regulations that apply to:

(1) applicants for admission to; or

(2) students enrolled in;

the state educational institution who do not qualify for or receive the educational costs exemption.

Sec. 5. The commission for higher education shall define the mandatory fees that are exempt educational costs in consultation with the commission.

Sec. 6. If an eligible applicant:

(1) qualifies for or is receiving the educational costs exemption under this chapter; and

(2) receives other financial assistance specifically designated for educational costs at the state educational institution in which the individual is enrolled or will enroll;

the state educational institution shall deduct the amount of the financial assistance specifically designated for educational costs from the amount of the educational costs exemption under this chapter.

Sec. 7. If an eligible applicant:

(1) qualifies for or is receiving the educational costs exemption under this chapter; and

(2) earns or is awarded a cash scholarship from any source that is paid or payable to the state educational institution in which the eligible applicant is enrolled or will enroll;

the state educational institution shall credit the amount of the cash scholarship to the eligible applicant for the payment of incidental expenses incurred by the eligible applicant in attending the state educational institution, with the balance, if any, of the award, if the

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terms of the scholarship permit, paid to the eligible applicant.

Sec. 8. (a) To be eligible to receive the educational costs exemption authorized by this chapter, an individual must:

- (1) join a fire department as a volunteer;
- (2) complete all necessary training and obtain required certifications;
- (3) agree in writing to remain active with the department for at least five (5) years; and
- (4) attend at least thirty percent (30%) of the fire department's emergency incidents, drills, and meetings each year.

(b) The determination as to whether an individual is eligible for the educational costs exemption authorized by this chapter is vested with the fire chief of the fire department of which the individual is a member.

(c) A fire chief whose fire department has volunteer firefighters as members may certify:

- (1) not more than five (5) volunteer firefighters for the initial academic year that firefighters meet the eligibility requirements set forth under subsection (a); and
- (2) not more than five (5) additional volunteer firefighters for each subsequent academic year;

as eligible applicants.

(d) A fire chief shall certify in writing to a state educational institution the eligibility of a volunteer firefighter for the tuition exemption authorized under this chapter.

Sec. 9. A person who knowingly or intentionally:

- (1) submits a false or misleading application or another document; or
- (2) makes a false or misleading statement;

to obtain a benefit under this chapter commits a Class A misdemeanor.

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